

PETER'S ROCK ASSOCIATION, INC.
P.O. BOX 762
NORTH HAVEN, CT 06473

President:
Christopher Fletcher

1st Vice President:
Hugh Davis

2nd Vice President:
Joanne Chvisuk

Secretary:
Audrey McClure

Treasurer:
Michael Fletcher

March 1, 2010

To: Senator Eric Coleman, Co-Chairman
Representative Brendan Sharkey, Co-Chairman
Honorable Members of the Planning & Development Committee
Room 2100, Legislative Office Building
Hartford, CT 06106

From: Christopher Fletcher, Peter's Rock Association, President

Re: **S.B. No. 227 AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNAUTHORIZED USE OF ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES AND SNOWMOBILES.**

Chairman Coleman, Chairman Sharkey, Senator Fasano, Representative Aman and distinguished members of the Planning & Development Committee, I am Chris Fletcher, President of Board of Directors for the Peter's Rock Association in North Haven. On behalf of the Board of Directors and over 200 members of the Association, I want to thank you for the opportunity to testify on Senate Bill 227 – AN ACT CONCERNING THE UNAUTHORIZED USE OF ALL-TERRAIN VEHICLES AND SNOWMOBILES.

The Peter's Rock Association was established in 2004, by a group of North Haven residents and others, with the assistance of the Town of North Haven. We are a 501(c)(3) corporation similar to the Sleeping Giant Park Association in Hamden. Our mission to preserve, maintain and improve 220-acres of Town-owned park and open space land, known as Peter's Rock, for public use as a park, forest and open space, with hiking trails, picnic areas, observation points and other uses as determined by the Association and the Town.

Since our incorporation, our members and volunteers have worked tirelessly to maintain the park and its trails, and to promote its safe use for the community. Yet our efforts have been hindered due to reckless and irresponsible use of all-terrain vehicles and other motorized vehicles in the park. Our concern is for the safety and well being of those who hike and walk the trails, and this activity has endangered hikers, upset the fragile ecology and disturbed the peace and serenity of the mountain. Our all volunteer organization has had an extremely difficult time maintaining the parks trails because of the frequent and out of control use by ATV riders.

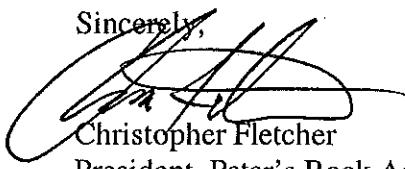
We have experienced widespread damage throughout the park, especially on our trails where deep ruts have been formed promoting serious erosion and drainage problems. The damage done to the trails by this activity has made hiking difficult and almost impossible. ATV riders have eroded the soil,

disturbed wetlands and destroyed plant life. Unmarked trails have been created by these vehicles, making it hard for hikers unfamiliar with the trail system to navigate through the park.

By increasing the penalties for unauthorized all-terrain vehicles, it is our hope that this step will help to deter this already illegal, unwanted and unacceptable activity in our park, and in parks across the State of Connecticut. We urge the committee to adopt this legislation as stronger laws are needed to put an end to the damaging effects of this activity.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in favor of this bill. We appreciate your support of this legislation, and thank the committee for the opportunity to share our concerns.

Sincerely,



Christopher Fletcher

President, Peter's Rock Association

PETER'S ROCK HISTORY, LEGENDS AND FOLKLORE

PETER'S ROCK ASSOCIATION

Mission Statement:

Peter's Rock is the highest point (373 feet above sea level) and largest parcel of open space (220 acres) in North Haven. The view from the summit is expansive; to the north, you can see Sleeping Giant and the Hanging Hills of Meriden; to the east, Branford and North Branford; and to the south, New Haven harbor. Peter's Rock is listed on the National Register of Historic Places.

Peter's Rock's principal geological feature is unique. On the western side, which is its boldest face, its pentagonal columnar formations are unlike most other rock upheavals that are part of an extensive chain of trap rock intrusions running from New Haven to the Massachusetts border.

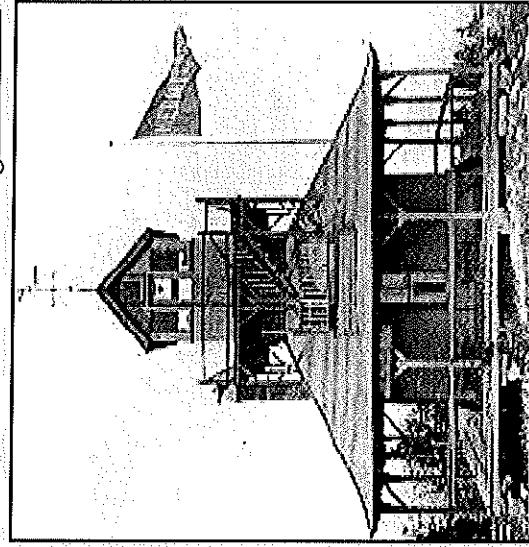
Its main geographic features are a second-growth mixed hardwood forest, high quality wetlands, and rock outcrops. Steep slopes are found especially in the central and southern portions of the site. A stream, which flows east to west and is eight to twelve feet wide, runs through the center of Peter's Rock.

For many years Peter's Rock--then known as Indian Rock--served as an Indian lookout. Among the farmers who later claimed Indian Rock was Peter Brockett, a Revolutionary War veteran who built a small hut at the northern base of the mountain and lived there for many years. Brockett named the site Peter's Rock.

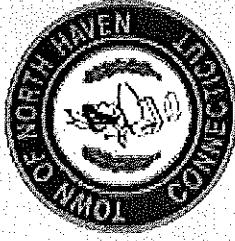
In 1901 a group of wealthy New Haven businessmen rented the summit and built an elegant hunting lodge, which they named "The Hermitage." It was used until the Great Depression, when it was abandoned. All that is left of the lodge are a few anchor rods and a dilapidated wine cellar on the southern edge of the summit. A reduced-scale replica of the lodge has recently been constructed at the main entrance to Peter's Rock Park on Middletown Avenue.

Peter's Rock Park Trail Map

"The Hermitage"



A joint effort by the:
Peter's Rock Association
and the
Town of North Haven.



For more information, contact:

Peter's Rock Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 762
North Haven, CT 06473
(203) 239-5321 x750

www.peterrockassociation.org

Trail Difficulties:

Easy: gradual slope with little or no obstructions - **Intermediate:** moderately sloped with sporadic obstructions and some erosion - **Difficult:** steeply sloped with many obstructions and severe erosion

Red trail (1): After an initial intermediate climb, the trail is wide and easy to the Little River bridge. It becomes an intermediate hike to orange(4) trail and green(6) trail. The final climb to the summit is difficult.

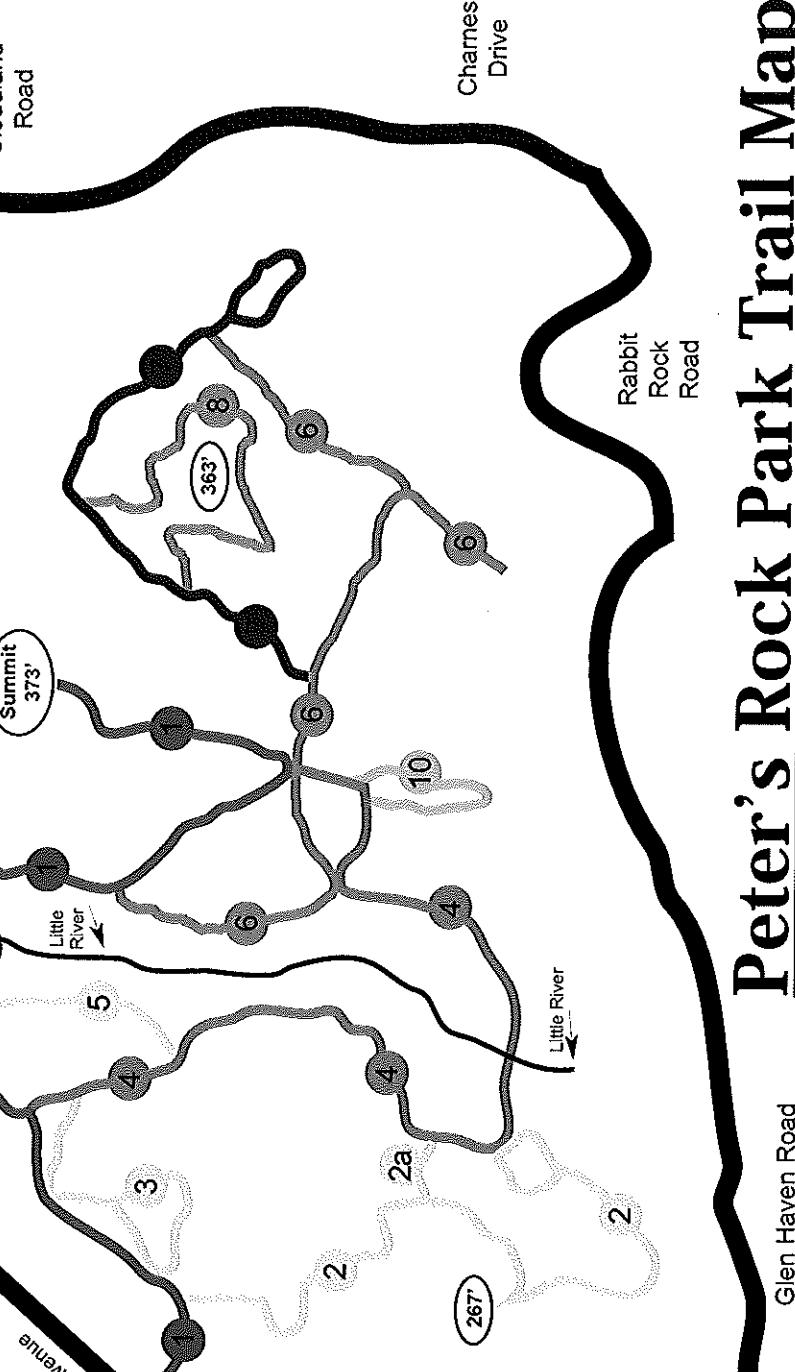
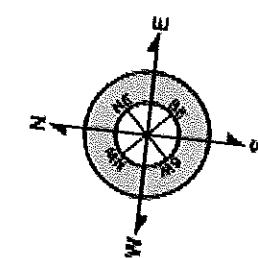
Orange trail (4): Intermediate climb, the trail is easy and flat to the intersection with the orange(4) trail. It becomes a difficult climb to an overlook of 267' and the descent is difficult with loose rocks and levels out to intermediate to the orange(4) trail.

This trail is a short hike beginning off of the orange(4) trail immediately after leaving the red(1) trail. It is an easy hike although it consists of a rather steep uphill and downhill loop.

Khaki trail (8): Intermediate trail with moderate slopes. Crosses over a footbridge. Leads to a clearing and an uphill grade - watch your footing at the end of the intersection of the red(1) trail and the green(6) trail.

Green trail (6): Easy trail from start off orange(4) trail, moderate slope to the red(1) trail. From here to the Organic Garden is under construction.

Blue trail (7): From the red(1) trail, intermediate trail to stream (no bridge). The water is shallow and can be muddy. Becomes difficult before it intersects with orange(4) trail end and meets again with the red(1) trail. As you continue past the summit climb, the trail becomes easy until it makes a 90 degree turn and becomes difficult with a steep slope and loose rocks, ending at the blue(7) trail.



Blue trail (7): Easy to intermediate with moderate slopes. Approaching the loop end there is a steep downhill and uphill climb. The loop portion is easy with some obstructions.

Khaki trail (8): Presently unmarked but 363' summit is reachable on intermediate unblazed trail.

Purple trail (9): Unmarked.

Lime trail (10): This is a short easy loop starting and ending on the orange (4) trail.

Pink trail (11): Easy to intermediate with a slight slope, obstructions and severe erosion on parts of the trail.

Peter's Rock Park Trail Map